



## RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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15 October 2009

**IND103258.FE**

India: Whether the Shiromani Akali Dal (Amritsar) party issues membership cards; a detailed description of the cards

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

The following information was obtained from correspondence sent to the Research Directorate on 25 September 2009 by a representative at the Consulate General of Canada in Chandigarh, India. The Representative also provided copies of sample membership cards issued by the Shiromani Akali Dal (Amritsar) party, which are attached to this Response. Although the copies of the two sample cards attached are in black in white, the original cards are in colour.

In the correspondence, the Representative stated that, according to the secretary-general of the Shiromani Akali Dal (Amritsar) party, all party members at all levels receive membership cards (Canada 25 Sept. 2009). The look of the cards is changing from one of the samples to the other (*ibid.*). The former card, which was still in circulation at the end of September 2009, will be used until they are out of stock (*ibid.*).

The party logo, printed on the back of the cards, is made up of a *khanda* placed between two half-lions with their backs to each other. The *khanda*, a symbol of the Sikh religion, consists of three elements: a double-edged dagger (*khanda*) in the centre surrounded by a circular iron weapon (*chakkar*), and two curved daggers (*kirpans*) on each side (All About Sikhs n.d.). On the version that is gradually being replaced, the logo is smaller, the party name is printed in yellow letters and the name of the party president is followed by the initials "M.P." On the new cards, the name of the party and its president are printed in red letters.

The party's coordinates appear in English on the front of both cards, where there are spaces for the member to write in their name, title and signature. According to the Representative, a photograph is usually affixed to new membership cards, even though the sample card attached does not have one (Canada 25 Sept. 2009).

On the back of both cards are spaces to write in the address, identification number and date of issue, as well as the name of the issuing authority. Both versions also bear the following: "If found please return to address overleaf. Return postage guaranteed."

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

### References

All About Sikhs. N.d. "The Sikh Insignia - Khanda." <<http://www.allaboutsikhs.com/introduction/the-sikh-insigniakhanda.html>> [Accessed 13 Oct. 2009]

Canada. 25 September 2009. Consulate General of Canada in Chandigarh, India. Correspondence.

### Additional Sources Consulted

**Oral sources:** Attempts to contact a representative of the Shiromani Akali Dal (Amritsar) Party directly were unsuccessful. The research centers of Great Britain and the Netherlands could not respond to a request for information within the time constraints for this Response.

**Publications :** *Political Handbook of the World 2009*, *Political Parties of the World 2009*.

**Internet sites, including:** Europa World, European Country of Origin Information Network ([ecoi.net](http://ecoi.net)), Shiromani Akali Dal (Amritsar), United Kingdom (UK) Home Office.

### Attachments

Shiromani Akali Dal. N.d.a. "Shiromani Akali Dal (S. Simranjit Singh Mann M.P.)," (former party membership card), 2 p.

\_\_\_\_\_. N.d.b. "Shiromani Akali Dal (S. Simranjit Singh Mann)," (new party membership card), 2 p.

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